

What is claimed is:

1. A loader device, for loading seeds and spacers into a container comprising:
A loader body defining a channel network comprising an elongate seed
passageway, an elongate spacer passageway, and a dispenser passageway
wherein each of said seed and spacer passageways extend in fluid
communication between a first open end and a first end of said dispenser
passageway, said loader body also defining a dispense port in fluid
communication with said dispense passageway;
said loader body further defining:
a seed cartridge port for receiving a seed cartridge having a seed dispense port,
said loader body including means for aligning and positioning the seed
dispense port in registry with one open end of said seed passageway;
a spacer port in fluid communication with one end of said spacer passageway;
a seed plunger for causing dispensement of a seed from the seed cartridge into
said open end of said seed passageway, whereby a seed dispensed from said
seed cartridge passes through said seed passageway to said dispenser
passageway.
2. The loader device of claim 1, wherein said loader body further defines:
a spacer cartridge port for receiving a spacer cartridge having a spacer
dispense port, said loader body including means for aligning and positioning
the spacer dispense port in registry with one open end of said spacer
passageway; and
a spacer plunger for causing dispensement of a spacer from the spacer
cartridge into said open end of said spacer passageway, whereby a spacer
dispensed from said spacer cartridge passes through said spacer passageway to
said dispenser passageway.
3. The loader device of claim 2, wherein said dispense port is further defined by
a container adaptor for removably receiving a container for accepting the
seeds and the spacers passed into said dispenser passageway.

4. The loader device of claim 1, wherein said dispenser passageway is an elongate passageway and said loader body further comprises a transparent window, said window defining at least a portion of said channel network so as to allow visualization of the seeds and the spacers passed into said dispenser passageway.
5. The loader device of claim 1, further comprising a releasable blocking means movable between a first position preventing the passage of any seeds and spacers within said dispenser passageway through said dispense port and a second position allowing passage of any seeds and spacers within said dispenser passageway through said dispense port.
6. The loader of claim 1, further comprising a stand assembly for maintaining said loader body in an orientation permitting gravity-assisted passage of seeds and spacers through said dispense port.
7. The loader of claim 6, wherein said stand assembly includes a base member and an elongate leg member extending between said base member and said loader body.
8. The loader of claim 7, further comprising a shield member movably mounted with respect to said leg member between a first position extending between a user and a container mounted to said container adaptor and a second position allowing a user access to the container mounted to said container adaptor.
9. The loader of claim 7, further comprising a spillage retaining cup positioned on said base member in underlying registry with said dispense port.
10. The loader device of claim 2, wherein the spacer magazine contains spacers made of a synthetic, bioabsorbable material.

11. The loader device of claim 10, wherein said spacers in said spacer magazine are sterile.
12. The loader device of claim 11, wherein said seed magazine contains seeds and said magazine and seeds are sterile and within sterile integrity packaging.
13. A method for dispensing seeds and spacers comprising the steps of:
(i) providing a loader with a body, seed magazine receiving and locating means, seed dispensing means for ejecting seeds from a seed magazine, a seed-transporting path leading to a dispensing outlet, and a spacer-transporting path leading to a dispensing outlet;
(ii) mounting a seed magazine containing one or more seeds in said seed transporting path and dispensing a seed through said dispensing outlet;
(iii) placing a spacer in said spacer transporting path; and
(iv) dispensing said spacer through said outlet.
14. The method of claim 13, wherein said spacers are placed and dispensed by the method comprising:
(i) providing said loader with a spacer magazine receiving and locating means;
(ii) mounting a spacer magazine containing spacers in said spacer magazine receiving and locating means;
(iii) ejecting a spacer into said spacer transporting path; and
(iv) dispensing said spacer through said dispensing outlet.
15. The method of claim 14, wherein said spacers are made of a synthetic, bioabsorbable material.
16. The method of claim 15, wherein said spacers in said spacer magazine are sterile.
17. The loader device of claim 16, wherein said seed magazine contains seeds and said magazine and seeds are sterile and within sterile integrity packaging.

18. The loader of claim 1, wherein said channel network exhibits a generally Y-shape.
- 5 19. The loader of claim 2, wherein said loader body further defines said seed cartridge port in a geometrically distinct manner from said spacer cartridge port so as to prevent a user from inadvertently inserting each cartridge improperly.
- 10 20. The loader of claim 2, further comprising a divider member extending from said loader body between said seed plunger and said spacer plunger.
21. A loader device for loading seeds and spacers into a container comprising a loader body defining a Y-shaped channel network communicating with a
15 dispenser port, a first leg of the channel network comprising a seed passageway extending between a seed insertion port and a dispenser passageway, a second leg of the channel network comprising a spacer passageway extending between a spacer insertion port and said dispenser passageway, wherein said dispenser port defines an open end of the dispenser
20 passageway.
22. The loader device of claim 21, wherein said loader body further defines a container adaptor about said dispenser port for removably receiving a container for the seeds and spacers passing through said channel network.
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